

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 DHA-02
/077 W

-----081258Z 114038 /44

O 081157Z JUN 77

FM AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6210

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 0924

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, SF, WA, US, UN

SUBJECT: NAMIBIA TALKS: OPENING SESSION

REF: CAPE TOWN 0922,

1. SUMMARY: DISCUSSION BETWEEN CONTACT GROUP (CG) AND FOREIGN MINISTER PIK BOTHA DURING FIRST SESSION OF TALKS ON NAMIBIA CENTERED ON THE COMPOSITION AND STRUCTURE OF THE TRANSITIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENT (TAA). IDEA PUT FORWARD BY BOTHA THAT TAA COULD BE DOMINATED NUMERICALLY BY TURNHALLE REPRESENTATIVES WAS REJECTED BY CG, WHICH INSISTED THAT IT COULD NOT DEPART FROM OUR CONFIDENTIAL

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PREVIOUSLY STATED POSITION THAT TAA SHOULD NOT BE TURNHALLED BY ANOTHER NAME. FACED WITH THIS, BOTHA SAID HE WOULD BE UNABLE TO DISCUSS THE MATTER FURTHER UNTIL HE HAD CONSULTED WITH PRIME MINISTER VORSTER. END SUMMARY.

2. CONTACT GROUP MET TODAY AT 0900 WITH PM VORSTER, FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA AND FOREIGN SECRETARY BRAND FOURIE.

VORSTER WELCOMED CG, THEN WITHDREW FROM MEETING. AFTER BOTHA STATED HIS WILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS TOPICS MENTIONED IN AIDE MEMOIRE (CAPE TOWN 882; STATE 124549; USUN 1706 AND PREVIOUS) AMB. MCHENRY DELIVERED OUR AGREED-UPON OPENING STATEMENT (REFTEL). BOTHA THEN TOOK UP FIRST ITEM ON AGENDA, THE NATURE OF THE TAA.

3. HE SAID SAG INTENDED TO INTRODUCE "A BASIC LAW" IN SA PARLIAMENT WITHIN A FEW DAYS. PROPOSED LEGISLATION WILL EMPOWER SA STATE PRESIDENT (WHO, OF COURSE, WILL ACT AS DIRECTED BY VORSTER) TO "PERFORM LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS" IN NAMIBIA NOW CARRIED OUT BY PARLIAMENT AND SA ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENTS. STATE PRESIDENT WOULD "RULE BY PROCLAMATION". BOTHA ADDED THAT SAG WOULD NOT INTRODUCE A CONSTITUTION FOR THE TERRITORY. AT A LATER POINT IN DISCUSSION, HE STATED SAG'S INTENTION TO PROVIDE SELF-GOVERNING STATUS TO THOSE ETHNIC GROUPS IN NAMIBIA THAT DO NOT HAVE SUCH STATUS--THE DAMARAS, HEREROS, TSWANAS, AND NAMAS.

4. BOTHA THEN TOOK UP THE COMPOSITION OF THE TAA. HE SAID TURNHALLE WAS "PREPARED TO CONSIDER" ESTABLISHMENT OF A BODY DIFFERENT FROM THAT ENVISAGED BY TURNHALLE DRAFT CONSTITUTION. THIS BODY, HE STATED, "WOULD GO BEYOND ETHNICITY", IN THAT IT WOULD INCLUDE OTHERS IN ADDITION TO ELEVEN MEMBERS REPRESENTING EACH ETHNIC GROUP IN NAMIBIA. HE WOULD NOT SPECIFY TOTAL NUMBER OF TAA MEMBERSHIP, BUT NOTED IT WOULD NOT BE LESS THAN SEVENTEEN AND NOT MORE THAN TWENTY-FOUR. HE NOTED THAT, AS WE HAD STIPULATED

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BEFORE, ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE TAA'S ACTIONS WOULD RESIDE WITH THE SAG.

5. THE TAA WOULD TAKE OVER SOME OF FUNCTIONS NOW CARRIED OUT BY SAG (BUT HE WOULD NOT SPECIFY WHICH). THE TAA WOULD MAKE DECISIONS, FORWARD THEM TO THE STATE PRESIDENT, WHO WOULD DECIDE WHETHER TO ENACT THEM INTO LAW BY MEANS OF A PROCLAMATION.

6. BOTHA STRESSED THAT TURNHALLE AND SAG WERE CONCEDING A MAJOR POINT WHICH REPRESENTED A "RADICAL CHANGE" FROM THE PREVIOUS TURNHALLE POSITION, AS DEFINED IN THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION. HE PUT IT THAT WHAT HE HAD PRESENTED TO US PROVIDED "A BROAD BASIS FOR AGREEMENT".

7. IN ENSUING DISCUSSION, HOWEVER, HE WOULD NOT EXCLUDE POSSIBILITY THAT THE ELEVEN TURNHALLE REPS ON TAA WOULD CONSTITUTE A NUMERICAL MAJORITY. NOR WOULD HE SPECIFY WHO WOULD BE THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE TAA OR FROM WHAT CATEGORIES OF NAMIBIAN SOCIETY THEY WOULD BE DRAWN.

8. MOST OF THE REST OF THE MEETING WAS DEVOTED TO THIS SUBJECT. MEMBERS OF THE CG COMMENDED SAG FOR GOING BEYOND A STRICTLY ETHNIC BASIS FOR TAA BUT EMPHASIZED THAT WE COULD NOT ACCEPT A DECK STACKED IN TURNHALLE'S FAVOR. WE ACCEPTED THAT TURNHALLE WOULD HAVE TO BE REPRESENTED ON THE TAA AND THAT IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE A TOTALLY NEUTRAL BODY. HOWEVER, WE HAD TO HAVE AN ARRANGEMENT THAT PROVIDED A REASONABLE CHANCE FOR FAIRNESS. COMPOSITION OF TAA WAS NOT THE ONLY CONSIDERATION, BUT WAS A HIGHLY IMPORTANT ONE. A TURNHALLE MAJORITY WOULD BE REJECTED BY THE PEOPLE OF NAMIBIA AND BY UNITED NATIONS, AND WOULD SYMBOLIZE TO AFRICANS AND OTHERS THAT SAG WAS NOT ACTING IN GOOD FAITH.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 0924

9. AFTER STATING THAT OUR CONCERN ON THIS SCORE PRESENTED THE SAG WITH A PROBLEM THAT COULD NOT BE SOLVED, BOTHA SAID HE WOULD TRY TO GET THE TAA MEMBERSHIP INCREASED FROM 12. PRESSED FURTHER TO TELL US ON WHAT BASIS OTHERS

WOULD BE CHOSEN TO PARTICIPATE AS MEMBERS OF THE TAA,
BOTH SAID THAT ON THIS TOO HE WOULD HAVE TO
CONSULT WITH VORSTER AND WITH TURNHALLE BEFORE GIVING US AN
ANSWER.

10. HE ALSO TOOK UNDER ADVISEMENT OUR SUGGESTION THAT
THE TAA MIGHT CONSIST OF TWO TIERS: AN ADVISORY COUNCIL
COMPOSED OF TURNHALLE REPS AND OTHERS (WHO WOULD NOT BE
OUTNUMBERED BY TURNHALLE), AND A SMALL NUMBER OF PROFESSIONAL
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ADMINISTRATORS WHO, IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE STATE
PRESIDENT, WOULD CONSIDER THE ADVICE OF THE LARGER BODY.

11. COMMENT: BOTH TURNED ON FULL FORCE OF HIS DRAMATIC
TALENTS IN STATING TO US, "GENTLEMEN, I RECOGNIZE WE ARE
AT A WATERSHED" OVER THE ISSUE OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE TAA.
HE GAVE IMPRESSION THAT HE WOULD DO HIS BEST, BUT THAT HE FACED
TREMENDOUS DIFFICULTY IN CONVINCING VORSTER AND TURNHALLE TO
ACCEPT A TAA ON WHICH TURNHALLE REPS WOULD NOT CONSTITUTE
A MAJORITY. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT NEITHER HE NOR VORSTER
WANT TALKS TO FLOUNDER ON THIS POINT, AND THAT THEY ARE PREPARED
TO GIVE. AFTERNOON SESSION WILL EITHER BEAR OUT OUR JUDGEMENT
OR CONFRONT US WITH SERIOUS PROBLEM. BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

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